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PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Item 24 I.D.#2927
ENERGY DIVISION RESOLUTION G-3360
November 13, 2003

R E S O L U T I O N

Resolution G-3360. Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) requests revisions to its tariff schedules to provide consistency with the tariffs of San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E), its sister company under Sempra Energy. SoCalGas's request is approved.

By SoCalGas Advice Letter (AL) 3287, filed August 29, 2003.

SUMMARY

This Resolution allows SoCalGas to change the language in Rule No. 15, Meter Tests, and Rule No. 16, Adjustment of Bills. With SoCalGas's proposed revisions, its Rules No. 15 and 16 will conform to SDG&E's Gas Rule No. 18. The revisions concern charges for meter tests, interest rates to be collected on bills for unauthorized power use, and the lack of interest charges related to billing error.

BACKGROUND

SoCalGas's intent for AL 3287 is to make its tariffs consistent with those of SDG&E, its affiliate under Sempra Energy. The latest iteration of SDG&E's Gas Rule No. 18, the provisions of which SoCalGas wishes to implement, was filed with the Commission on August 27, 2003 and became effective October 6, 2003. Nevertheless, those provisions of SDG&E's which SoCalGas wishes to adopt have been substantially incorporated into SDG&E's Gas Rule No. 18 since at least August 1997.

Under the revised SoCalGas Rule No. 15, minimal tiered charges for meter tests (applicable when tests are requested within six months of previous meter tests) are replaced with a flat rate of \$50.

SoCalGas Rule No. 16, Section B, Adjustment of Bills for Unauthorized Use, has been amended to allow SoCalGas to collect an interest rate of 10% per annum on unauthorized use billings, as SDG&E's Gas Rule No. 18 currently provides.

SoCalGas Rule No. 16, Section C, Adjustment of Bills for Billing Error, is also amended to parallel SDG&E's Gas Rule No. 18. The words "without interest" have been added to make it clear that interest will not be calculated into bills reflecting either overcharges or undercharges. Specific procedures and limitations from SDG&E's Gas Rule No. 18 regarding billing errors resulting from overcharges and undercharges and their applicability to residential and nonresidential customers are also adopted.

SoCalGas Rule No. 16, Section D, Adjustment of Bills for Meter Error, revises language defining meter error, and inserts the "without interest" language here as well.

NOTICE

Notice of AL 3287 was made by publication in the Commission's Daily Calendar. Southern California Gas Company states that a copy of the Advice Letter was mailed and distributed in accordance with Section III-G of General Order 96-A.

PROTESTS

SoCalGas AL 3287 was not protested.

DISCUSSION

The Commission has reviewed SoCalGas AL 3287, and finds SoCalGas's request to be reasonable.

SoCalGas is proposing a \$50 charge for meter tests requested by customers, when a satisfactory meter test has already been performed within the last six months, or on meters installed within the last six months. This fee does not seem unreasonable, and is the same fee we have already approved for SDG&E.

In addition, SoCalGas is proposing a 10% interest rate for unpaid bills associated with unauthorized use. "Unauthorized use" is defined by SoCalGas as "the use of energy in noncompliance with the Utility's tariffs or applicable law." Such

unauthorized use could include, but is not limited to, meter tampering, unauthorized connection or reconnection, theft, fraud, and/or intentional or unintentional use of gas for which SoCalGas is not fully compensated. While this interest rate is high compared to current general interest rates, it was previously approved by the Commission for SDG&E and is justified here by its furtherance of tariff uniformity.

COMMENTS

This is an uncontested matter in which the resolution grants the relief requested. Accordingly, pursuant to PU Code 311(g)(2), the otherwise applicable 30-day period for public review and comment is being waived.

FINDINGS

1. AL 3287 would bring SoCalGas's Rules 15 and 16 into substantial parallel with SDG&E's Rule 18.
2. Charges for frequent meter tests would be revised.
3. A 10% interest rate would be applied to unauthorized use billings.
4. Overcharges or undercharges by SoCalGas resulting from billing error or meter error would not be subject to any interest.

THEREFORE IT IS ORDERED THAT:

The request of the Southern California Gas Company to make revisions in its Rule 15 and Rule 16 as requested in Advice Letter AL 3287 is approved.

This Resolution is effective today.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, passed and adopted at a conference of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California held on November 13, 2003; the following Commissioners voting favorably thereon:

WILLIAM AHERN
Executive Director